

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. Parliamentary inquiry: Is now a time to speak or are we in some kind of special business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator may be recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. I seek recognition, to use 5 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TWO-YEAR BUDGETING

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I know it is late and there is nobody here. Somehow or another, it seems like, when you have things that are moving along and moving rather slowly, you have to regularly call them to the attention of the Senate.

I do not have anything but great praise for how we got here with this bill. Everybody is saying it could not be helped. Senator REID and I understand. A piece of this bill is ours. We could never get it done until late in the session because it seemed as if nobody wanted to understand the problem we had. We couldn't do the things we were supposed to do because there was a misunderstanding in the budget about how to pay for things. So that was done.

The thing is, if Senators had before them tonight, before this bill, a final vote on a measure that said we are going to do this every 2 years instead of every 1 year, and we are going to do a budget resolution for 2 years, do you know what would have happened? It would have passed with 75 votes because people around here understand we do not have to do this every year. You can do it for 2 years, with 2-year budgets and the right to have, in between those appropriations bills, the special kind of special needs appropriations.

It certainly would not be like it is now. You have those now and you have appropriations every year. You have the supplemental appropriations.

I took this minute to say someone, sometime—maybe before I leave here—will do that. I actually believe the House is ready. They voted on it. They didn't have the bill we would have, but we could go to conference. But I just want to use this last few minutes. Nobody is around and I ought to be out of here at home. I have some new grandchildren at home and they can't watch me at this late hour because they are too little, so I should be gone.

But it is good to have an example. Frankly, I think if we had 2-year appropriations, we wouldn't have this because I think the individual bills would be done, if you had, instead of every year, 2 years to do them. I think we would have a lot of time for oversight and other things we do not do. In fact, my memory is not as good as it was and I can't tell you the percent, but a huge amount of the Senate's voting time and floor time is used for just three things: budget, appropriations,

and supplemental appropriations. That is a huge amount of the time. I don't know how we get all the other things done.

So if we could do it every 2 years, it seems to me we would all be the better for it. We would be less apt to have this kind of thing occur with an omnibus, meaning overall, many—all put in one.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TALENT). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in a bit we will be wrapping up. There is a lot of business that is being tended to and it will probably be 30 minutes or so before we officially wrap up. I thought I would address several issues that have come to my attention over the last several days and cover some of the events that have occurred earlier this week.

The first is an issue that leads from what we learned earlier this week when the Department of Defense warned American military bases worldwide to cease officially sponsoring the Boy Scouts of America.

The Department issued its directive in response to a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union. The Illinois chapter of the ACLU accuses the U.S. Government of improperly supporting a group which administers a religious oath. The ACLU's legal attack has forced the Defense Department to suspend its decades long tradition of supporting Scouts and it may even prevent Scouts from celebrating their annual jamborees on Defense installations. But it does not stop here.

There is fresh evidence that the ACLU intends to end all Federal support for the Boy Scouts of America. In their view, where there is Government, there cannot be faith. The separation of church and state is a bedrock principle of our Republic, and Americans are grateful that we are free to worship as we choose without Government interference or fear of persecution. But to this legislator, the ACLU's continued attacks on the Boy Scouts is starting to become its own form of persecution.

The Boy Scouts of America is a congressionally chartered organization. It serves a patriotic, charitable, and educational purpose. Furthermore, its support by the Federal Government is outlined in U.S. law. I was a Boy Scout as a young boy in Nashville, TN. All three of my sons, Harrison, Jonathan, and Bryan, have been Boy Scouts here as we have lived in Washington, DC.

We have found, and it is generally accepted, that Boy Scouts and Scouting

is a noble tradition, an honorable tradition, that inculcates the very best of our values. Since its founding in the early 20th century, scouting has served America's communities and families with distinction and with honor. The Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts promote character in leadership by instilling in our youth values such as honor, duty, charity, integrity. These programs help prepare our young people for the ethical and moral choices that they will face throughout our lives.

It is for these reasons that I introduced a bill called the Save Our Scouts bill to reaffirm our longstanding commitment to the tradition of scouting. The legislation stipulates that no Federal law, including any rule, regulation, directive, instruction, or order shall be construed to limit any Federal agency from providing any form of support to the Boy Scouts of America or Girl Scouts of the United States of America or any organization chartered by the Boy Scouts of America or the Girl Scouts of the United States of America.

Activities supported include holding meetings, jamborees, camporees, or other Scouting activities on Federal property, or hosting or sponsoring any official event of such organization.

I am disappointed that this bill did not pass by unanimous consent, but I am hopeful that in the next Congress common sense will prevail and both Chambers will give their unanimous support to protecting the Scouts.

Scouting has served generations of American boys and girls. It has earned its place in the hearts of millions of Americans who look back fondly, just as I do, on that special time of merit badges, hikes, fellowship, and service. I am confident that we will preserve this honorable tradition for years and generations to come.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 2004

On a separate issue, late last night a very important bill called the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 passed and is now on its way to the President's desk for his signature. Several years ago, I had the opportunity in this body to chair what was then called the Subcommittee on Individuals with Disabilities, and over that Congress, that 2-year period, spent a great deal of time focused on this particular legislation called IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

I commend the Senators from New Hampshire and Massachusetts who have done a tremendous job in their bipartisan work on this very important legislation. There are more than 6.5 million children with disabilities who are served through IDEA, along with more than 430,000 special education teachers. The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 carefully addresses the needs of those disabled children and the schools they attend.

The bill refocuses Federal law on outcomes for disabled children, ensuring that States focus on academic results, not process, while still guaranteeing the rights of the child to be protected.